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Letter dated 14 January 2004 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 8 January 2004, which I received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

04-20933 (E) 160104

Annex

Letter dated 8 January 2004 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on the operations of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) for November 2003. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jaap de Hoop **Scheffer**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-30 November 2003) there were just over 11,890 troops deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

Security

2. The overall situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable during the period under review.

3. On 4 November, the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo sentenced Enes Sakrak to 10 year's imprisonment for the killing of 30 Bosnian-Croat civilians in the village of Grabovica in 1993. Sakrak was arrested in August 2003 along with Mustafa Hota for war crimes committed by the ninth Mountain Brigade and was tried by the Cantonal Court after it had received permission from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to proceed.

4. On 18 November, the Tribunal announced that it had indicted Milan Babic on one count of crimes against humanity and four counts of violations of the laws and customs of war for crimes allegedly committed in Croatia between August 1991 and June 1992. At that time, Babic was the President/Prime Minister of the self-proclaimed "Republika Srpska Krajina" and is charged with participating in a joint criminal enterprise, the goal of which was the ethnic cleansing of the Krajina region of Croatia. Babic is a past President of the Serbian Democratic Party and recently gave evidence against Milosevic in his trial at The Hague. He appeared before the Tribunal on 26 November.

Attacks against SFOR and SFOR operational activities

5. There were no significant acts of violence directed against SFOR personnel over the reporting period.

6. SFOR continued to contribute to the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to monitor possible terrorist-related threats throughout the country. SFOR remained engaged with Operation Harvest framework operations and exercises. In November, new weapons and ammunition caches were found in the area of operations. On 12 November, SFOR performed an operation in the vicinity of Nevesinje. Troops searched caves for possible weapon and ammunition caches while performing door-to-door weapons collections. During the operation, troops seized a considerable amount of arms and ammunition. On 1 December, SFOR headquarters released the results of Operation Harvest for the year so far. In comparison with last year (2002), overall collections are up by substantial margins in all categories, with the exception of hand grenades, which are down very slightly. Overall, November 2003 has been a fruitful month.

7. The results of weapons turned-in/collected from 1 to 30 November within the framework of Operation Harvest are: 2,009 small arms (rifles, pistols and revolvers, etc); 462,910 rounds of ammunition less than 20 mm; 1,606 rounds of ammunition between 20 mm and 76 mm; 32 rounds of ammunition more than 76 mm; 3,858 hand grenades; 734 mines; 2,236.75 kilograms of explosives; 4,047 other items (mortars and mortar rounds, rifle grenades, handmade ordnance, attack rocket, etc).

8. On 5 November, SFOR mounted a search operation, comprising simultaneous snap inspections of the offices of the Chief Inspector of the Federation Financial Police in Sarajevo and the Zenica Prosecutor. The operation was carried out in support of the High Representative's effort to entrench the rule of law and was a follow-up to the discovery of wiretaps on SFOR and international community personnel on 14 October. SFOR will conduct a document exploitation (DOCEX) to determine who is accountable for the wiretaps.

9. SFOR continues to assist individual units of the Republika Srpska Army (VRS) in destroying unstable, surplus ammunition in accordance with Operation Armadillo, which directs SFOR to provide explosive ordnance disposal and anti-tank support to the VRS. To better coordinate the efforts and closely monitor movements of ammunition across the area of operations, a coordination centre was established at SFOR headquarters. The Operation intends to establish a high-capacity ammunition destruction facility, which will be capable of destroying the unstable ammunition no later than 1 March 2004. Results from early September 2003 to the beginning of November 2003 are impressive: over 900,000 rounds of ammunition, 39,000 hand grenades, 23,000 mortar rounds and nearly 5,000 anti-tank mines have been destroyed.

10. On 18 November, Switzerland announced that it would contribute 400,000 Swiss francs to the operation of the Peace Support Operations Training Centre at Camp Butmir in Sarajevo. A number of allied and partner countries have also contributed to this project. The memorandum of understanding for the Centre was signed in a ceremony at Camp Butmir on 20 November.

11. On 11 November, the Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Powers in Europe approved the release of airspace between FL410 and FL460 for civil air traffic and delegated its control to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Directorate of Civil Aviation. These changes represent a further positive step in the course of normalization of civil aviation activities in the Balkan region.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

12. On 28 November, the Republika Srpska National Assembly officially passed eight amendments to the Constitution of the Republika Srpska related to defence reform. The amendments transfer jurisdiction over the command of the VRS from the President of the Republika Srpska to the tri-presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and transfer the right to declare a state of war from the Assembly to the State level. The decision on the amendments was taken unanimously and passed by the Republika Srpska Chamber of Peoples on 29 November. These amendments to the Constitution paved the way for the House of Peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina to adopt their draft defence law in the first reading, and for the House of Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina to adopt the law on 1 December.

13. During the reporting period, the Entity Armed Forces have carried out normal training activities, in compliance with the military provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement. In November 2003, there were no reports of missing weapons from weapons storage sites.

14. There were a total of 176 Entity Armed Force training and operation activities (90 VRS and 86 VF) during the reporting period and 305 movements (187 VRS and 118 VF) conducted during the reporting period. A total of 200 Entity Armed Force

mine-clearing activities were monitored during the reporting period. SFOR conducted a total of 52 inspections of weapons storage sites and ammunition storage sites during the reporting period (26 VRS and 26 VF). Four weapons storage sites were closed this month and another 11 are pending closure.

Cooperation with international organizations

15. Within capabilities and in accordance with its mandate, SFOR continues to provide assistance to the international organizations working in theatre.

Outlook

16. In November, SFOR continued to contribute to a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Operation Armadillo is a major milestone in bringing the armed forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina in line with COMSFOR's mandate that the total number of weapons and ammunition storage sites in Bosnia and Herzegovina be brought down to fewer than 10. SFOR believes that a similar level of effort will be necessary to reduce the stores of ammunition of the VF as well. On the political front, the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina has passed several key amendments that will permit State-level control of all its armed forces, which is a key condition for eventual membership in the Partnership for Peace. November was a month of slow but substantial progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina.